Guide to the Railroad Retirement Board's Website
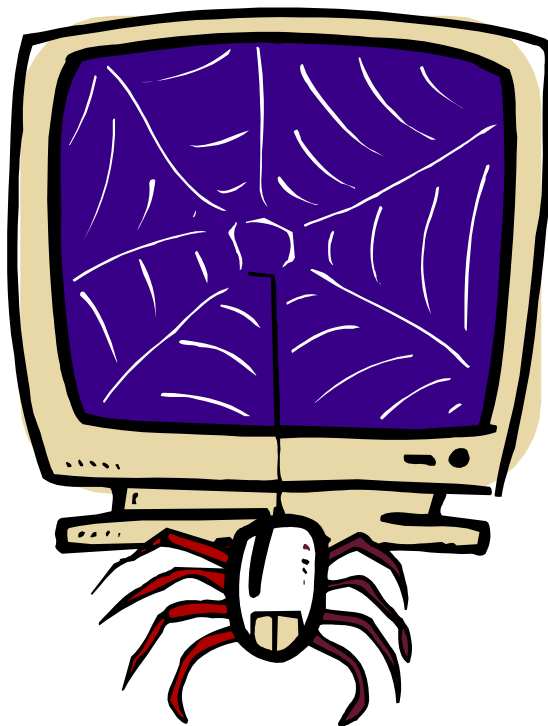## www.rrb.gov

Introduction

In 1996, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) established a home page on the Internet. The RRB Website was designed to give railroad employees and employers a place to get information concerning benefit programs, access to news and publications, designation of contacts for questions, and general information about the RRB. We continually update the Web page to give the best service and most current information to the railroad community.

 Because we understand many people are not comfortable using a computer and the Internet, we have tried to simplify the technical aspects and present these instructions in an easy to understand format. This booklet serves as a guide to the RRB Website, from logging on and using the menu system, to locating information. The guide is complete and correct at time of publication. Changes to the Website will be noted on the "What's New" area, as well as the body of the Home page.

Logging on

In order to log on to the RRB Website, you must have a computer, modem, and an Internet provider. (Depending on the Internet provider, a communications software package may also be needed.) Because each server is slightly different, follow the
log-on procedures provided by your Internet provider. After establishing a connection to the

Internet, access the RRB Website at **http://www.rrb.gov**. The RRB Home page will be displayed.

Navigating Around the Website

All RRB Web pages have options for navigating around the Web page the user is currently on, as well as, the Website in general. Within a Web page, the user will find words and/or phrases that are underlined and colorized. In Internet terms, these are known as hyperlinks, or links. These links may also appear in graphic format, referred to as an image map, such as the train graphic on the footers of the Web pages. When pointing to a link, the mouse pointer will change to a hand. By clicking on the link, the user will access Web pages containing additional information related to that subject.   **Note: Because some Web servers do not support image maps, text links are available just below the image map.**

Each page header and footer contains the following options for navigating the Website:

Search   Search the Website for a particular word or phrase.

Contact Us   Send e-mail to the RRB. **Caution: Before sending e-mail, it is important that the user review the RRB's E-mail Notice.** (A copy of the notice is on the bottom of the next page.)

Privacy Policy   Review the principles of the RRB's Internet privacy policy. (A copy of the notice is on the top of the next page.)

What's New   Information concerning any recent changes to the Website.

Site Map   An overview of information available on the Website, with text links to information without going through various Web pages. (This format may also be best for Web browsers that do not support image maps.)

Links   Access Web pages of interest to the railroad community.

Home   Return to the RRB Home Page. (An overview of the RRB Home Page follows.)

Privacy Policy

The privacy of our customers has always been important to the Railroad Retirement Board. Our concern for your privacy is no different in the electronic age.
Our internet privacy policy embodies the following principles:

- You do not have to give us personal information to visit our site.
- We collect personally identifiable information (such as name, e-mail address, Social Security number, or other unique identifier) only if specifically and knowingly provided by you. You should note, however, that when you send us an e-mail, you automatically furnish us with your e-mail address, even if you don't furnish any additional personal information.
- Personally identifying information that you voluntarily provide us will be used only for the purpose you intend it. For example, if you e-mail us a suggestion on how we can improve our website, we will use the information you provide only for that purpose. If you complete a form to ask us a specific question about your benefits and provide us with the needed identifying information and where we can reach you, we will use the information to obtain an answer and respond to you (by mail or phone.)
- Certain non-personal information about your visit to our website is collected for statistical purposes. The RRB sometimes analyzes the information to measure customer interest in the various areas of our site.
- We do not give, sell, or transfer any personal information to a third party.
- We do not use "cookies." (A "cookie" is a file some websites place on the hard drive of your computer to monitor your use of the site.)

E-mail Notice

You have the option of using e-mail to contact us. This is not secure e-mail! We ask that you not send information by e-mail that you would not want a third party to read. If you need to provide us with personal information, such as your Social Security number or home address, please call, write or visit your field office.

In reply, we will send you only general information by e-mail. If we can identify you and have your telephone number or address in our records, we will furnish any personal information by telephone or letter. This helps to ensure we do not send your personal information to someone asking for it without your knowledge.

RRB Home Page

The RRB home page is divided into two sections. The left side of the page lists the Website menu. The right side of the page lists selected topics by subject. Each menu selection is discussed in the next section. (Navigational tools are discussed on page 2.)
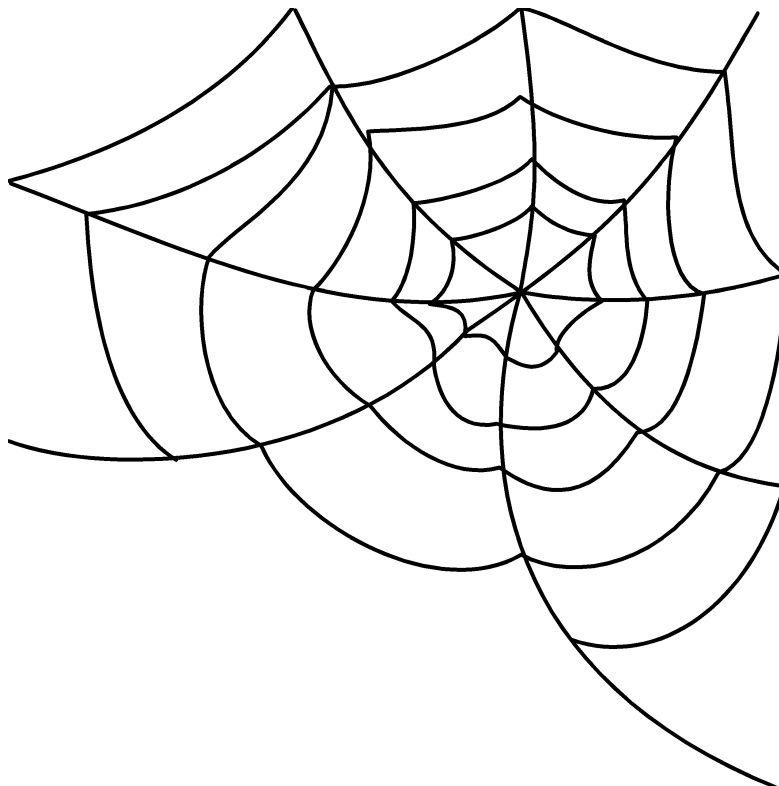
Benefit Programs

Retirement Annuities – Contains information concerning retirement annuity benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act, including how to apply, eligibility requirements, computing an employee or spouse annuity, etc.

Survivor Benefits - Contains information concerning survivor annuity benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act, including how to apply, eligibility requirements, events that may affect the annuity, etc.

Unemployment and Sickness Benefits – Contains information concerning unemployment and sickness benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, including how to apply, eligibility requirements, events that may affect the annuity, etc.

Medicare– Provides a basic overview of the Medicare program, including how to apply, eligibility requirements, determining expenses which are and are not covered, etc.

Social Security Benefits– Explains the coordination of benefits between the railroad retirement and social security systems. Answers to the most common dual benefit questions are included.

News and Publications

News Releases – Copies of the latest press releases issued by the Railroad Retirement Board.

FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions) **–** This section contains answers to the most frequently asked questions concerning the Railroad Retirement Board, and benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act, and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

Publications – Users can download copies of RRB forms directly to their computer. In order to download some forms, the user will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Wherever Adobe Acrobat Reader is required, there is a link to download a free copy of the program. Forms needing Adobe Acrobat Reader are identified with a "PDF' graphic. There are documents and forms in PDF format throughout the Website.

Publicaciones en Espanol – Users can download copies of RRB informational pamphlets in Spanish. In order to download some forms, the user will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Wherever Adobe Acrobat Reader is required, there is a link to download a free copy of the program. Forms needing Adobe Acrobat Reader are identified with a "PDF' graphic. There are documents and forms in PDF format throughout the Website.

Statistical Information – This section includes statistical information regarding RRB programs, as complied by the Bureau of the Actuary.

> **Note:** When the new **Tax Rate and Maximum Earnings Base Information** becomes available in October, it will be posted here first. Accordingly, visitors to the RRB Website will have this information before the rate notification letters can be mailed.

Latest on Legislation – This section includes the latest information regarding the Railroad Retirement Act, and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, including congressional testimony, background information, and proposed changes to the Acts.

Freedom of Information Act (Electronic Reading Room) **–** Information for attorneys, appeals procedure, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, legal opinions, copies of Board Coverage Decisions, and links to the Federal Register, and the Government Information Locator Service.

Legal Information – A section of the Freedom of Information Act page that contains legal opinions briefs and court case updates.

Employer Information – The section has employer forms as well as:
> **Program Letters and Circular Letters –** Keeps employers, covered by the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts, informed of issues and procedures, and provides assistance and clarification of responsibilities under the Acts.
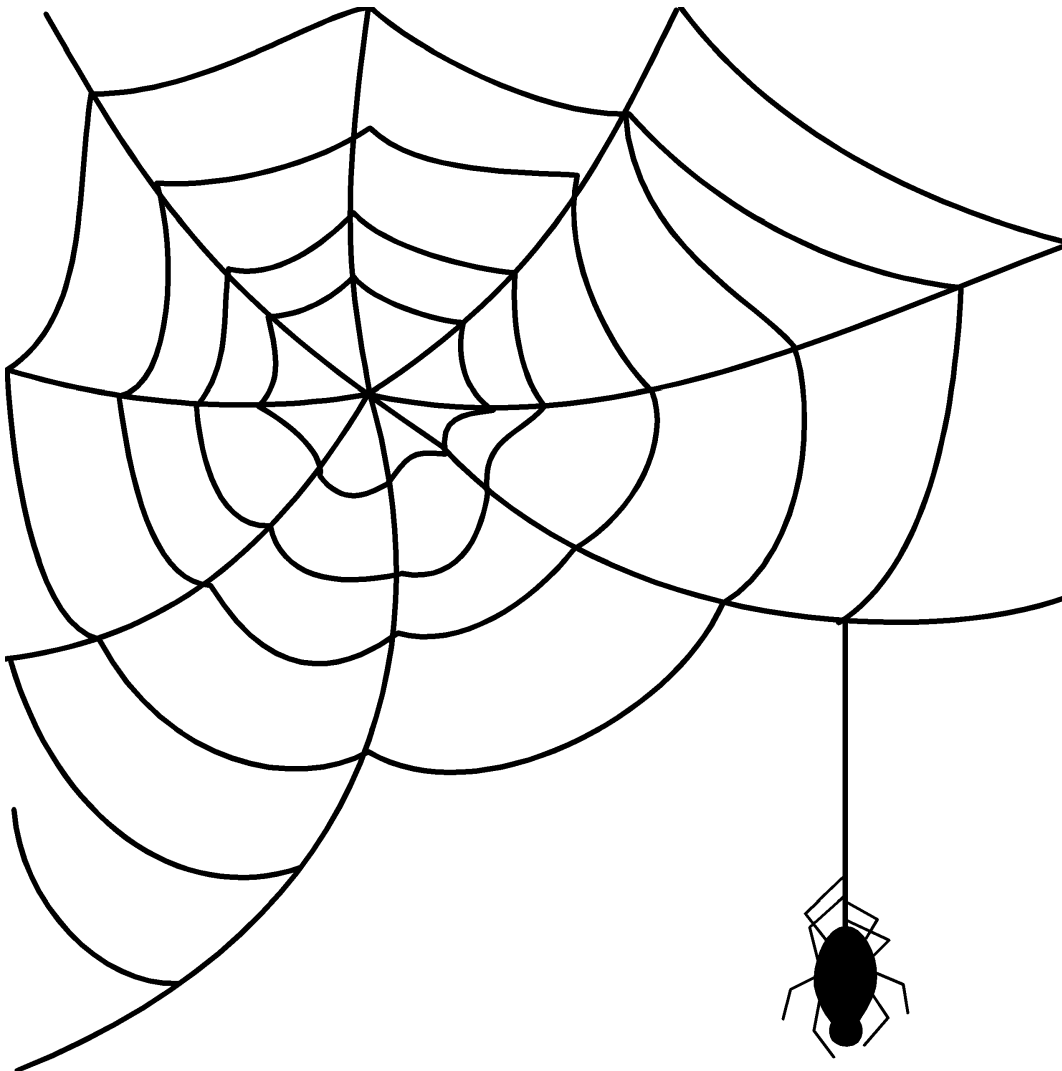>
> **Employers –** Instructions for reporting service and compensation information under Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.
>
> **Creditable Sickness Payments –** Instructions for sickness benefit payors on reporting requirements under Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.

Labor Employers – Instructions for rail labor on reporting requirements under Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.

Labor Employer Information – These are the reporting instructions for labor employers. (See above)
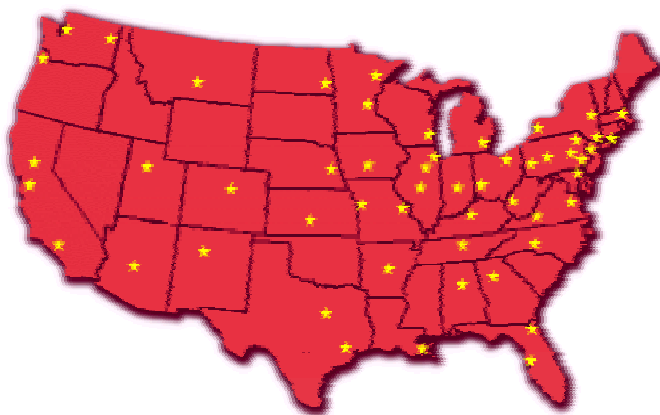
Fun Facts - Specially designed for children, educators and railroad enthusiasts. Web links to pages for children at other federal agencies are included.

Contacting the RRB

Toll-Free Helpline – A description of the RRB Help-Line, an automated telephone system available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A variety of service options are available to railroad employees, retirees, and unemployment and sickness claimants. In addition, callers are able to obtain the address and telephone number of their local RRB field office by entering their Zip Code.

Field Offices – A directory of RRB district offices throughout the country. Users may choose a specific district office, by either clicking on a star on a map of the United States, or by choosing from a listing of offices.

By selecting an office, information about that office will appear on the screen. The information includes the address, telephone number, E-mail address, fax number, and in some cases, directions, tips on parking, and a picture of the building in which the office is housed.

Inspector General Hotline – Procedure for reporting suspected cases of fraud or abuse concerning the Railroad Retirement Board's benefit programs. **While suspected abuse may be reported via e-mail, the user should review the RRB's E-mail notice.** (A copy of the notice is on page 3.)

About the RRB

Agency overview – An overview of the agency, including the development of the railroad retirement and unemployment insurance systems, an explanation of both the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts, and the RRB's organization and functions.

Organizational Chart – A graphic breakdown of the agency's organization, and e-mail addresses for some agency's divisions and personnel.

Chair Office – The home page of the Board Chair's Office of the RRB.

Labor Member Office – The home page of the Office of the Labor Member.

Management Member Office - The home page of the Office of the Management Member.

Budget and Finance – Access to annual reports and financial statements of the RRB, the federal budget, Congressional testimony, and statistical information.

Strategic Plan 1997-2002 – An explanation of the RRB's plan for addressing issues facing the agency, establishing performance goals, and specific objectives for the agency in support of its mission, for the years 1997-2002.

Customer Service Plan- Addresses issues of customer service standards, openness, accessibility, and accountability. Updated periodically with progress reports.

Latest News Release Topics

 A listing of the latest press releases issued by the RRB is available by clicking here.

Frequently Requested Information

Railroad Jobs for Railroad Workers – Contains a listing of railroad jobs available throughout the railroad industry. Railroads report job vacancies to their local district office, for inclusion on the Website. The job listing is updated every two weeks, and is noted on the "What's New" Web page. Users may register on this page to be notified when changes are made. This option is also available on other selected pages of the Website.

Genealogical Inquires – This section allows users to request information from Railroad Retirement Board records for the purpose of genealogical research. **Users should be aware there is a fee for each record search.**

Supplemental Annuity Tax Rate – Quarterly updates of the supplemental annuity tax rate are posted here as soon as the rates are released.

Tax Questions - Contains answers to the most commonly asked questions concerning the benefit statements issued by the Railroad Retirement Board. The questions and answers can be printed for a quick reference guide. (Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to print. As mentioned before, a free copy is available)

Recent Changes to the Website

A chronological listing highlighting improvements and changes to the RRB website.

FYI: Spotlighting Information on the Website

This section identifies information of particular interest to users of the RRB website.

Special Recognition for our Website

Bobby Approved – The RRB website has been "Bobby approved". Bobby is a web-based tool, offered by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) that analyses web pages for their accessibility to people with disabilities through the innovative use of computer technology.

Access America for Seniors – Access America for Seniors is a government-wide initiative to deliver electronic services from government agencies and organizations to seniors.

Searching the Website

By clicking the search link on the Web page headers and footers, users may search for a specific word or phrase. A copy of the initial search screen is shown below. Users can determine the number of documents returned as a match. However, the maximum is 100. (**Note:** Because the search command will only list the first 100 documents containing the word or phrase, search words and/or phrases should be as specific as possible. For example, a search on the word "unemployment" finds 100 documents, while the phrase "unemployment benefits" finds 28 documents.)

Use Quotation Marks when searching for an exact phrase. Without quotation marks, the search command will locate pages where the individual words in the phrase appear, as well as pages where the exact phrase is used.

To search enter a single word, several words or a phrase in quotes.
Punctuation marks and special characters (period, comma, #, @, ?, ! etc.) can not be searched for.

Search For: [   ]

Maximum number of results to return: [100 ▼]

[Search]   [Reset]   [Help]

After completing the search, a list of documents containing the word or phrase will be displayed. Each listing contains a link to a copy of the document. By clicking on the link, the user can access the document.

`Downloading PDF files`

The RRB Website contains a number of documents and forms in PDF format. PDF (portable document format) is a special format that allows documents to be put online that ordinarily could not be, because they are too complicated to be put in the standard Web page format (HTML). The PDF version will look exactly like the original document. The following is a description of how to download a free copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader to allow the user to see the PDF.

To view and download forms in PDF format . . .

1. Click on Acrobat Reader at the top of any Web page containing PDF documents. This will access the Adobe Acrobat Website.

2. Scroll down to the pre-selected items:
        Acrobat Reader   (Do not change this)
        English   (Change only if you prefer another language.)
        Windows 95   (Windows 3.1 and Macintosh users will need to change.)

By checking the option for searching PDF files, the download time will increase.

3. Entering your areas of interest and e-mail address are optional.

4. Click on Download.

5. Adobe Acrobat Reader will begin downloading to your system.

6. Installation instructions, updates, and helpful hints can be displayed.

7. It is not necessary to register your copy of Acrobat Reader.

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